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LONG BRANCH

COPS: TEEN SLAYS SISTER AND PARENTS



Police exit a Long Branch house Monday where four people were shot and killed with a semi-automatic rifle on New Year's Eve. A teenager whose name is being withheld has been charged as an adult with murder, authorities say. Patti Sapone, NJ Advance Media for The Star-Ledger

Family friend also among dead; motive unclear

Kelly Heyboer For The Star-Ledger

A 16-year-old armed with a semi-automatic rifle shot and killed his parents, his sister and a family friend just before midnight on New Year's Eve in Long Branch, authorities said Monday.

The teen, whose name was not released because he is a juvenile, has been charged as an adult with four counts of murder and a weapons offense.

"It's a terribly tragic incident," Monmouth County Prosecutor Christopher Gramiccioni said during a news conference in Long Branch.

The teen was taken into custody without incident, Gramiccioni said. Law enforcement officials would not comment on the teen's possible motive for allegedly shooting his family.

Neighbors and friends said the 16-year-old had special

needs, did not attend regular public schools and was cared for by his mother. Police said there was no history of domestic violence at the house.

The youth killed his father, Steven Kologi, 44; mother, Linda Kologi, 42; sister Brittany Kologi, 18; and family friend Mary Schultz, 70, of Ocean Township, Gramiccioni said.

Two other family members were also at the house, but were not hurt, prosecutors said.

"The grandfather of the suspect as well as the brother of the suspect thankfully left the home," Gramiccioni said.

A 911 call reporting the shooting was made at 11:43 p.m. from inside the duplex on the 600 block of Wall Street, Gramiccioni said.

A Century Arms semi-automatic rifle was seized at the scene, Gramiccioni said. The rifle was legally owned and registered to a resident of the house, though authorities

SEE SHOOTING, 4

JERSEY SHORE

Cold, but just another day at the beach

Rob Jennings and Tim Hawk For The Star-Ledger

Brrrrring it on!

The coldest New Year's Day ever recorded in New Jersey couldn't stop a pair of polar bear plunges that demonstrated that some beachgoers aren't mere fair-weather fans of the Shore. While some of the plunges were canceled because of the below-normal temperatures, those in Atlantic City and Asbury Park went on as planned.

In Asbury Park, about 500 adventurers ran into the Atlantic Ocean on Monday, with an especially hardy few diving under the waves.

Turnout at the 15th annual Sons of Ireland Polar Bear Plunge was about half of what it was in peak years, longtime

SEE PLUNGE, 6



Scores brave ice-cold surf during Monday's Atlantic City Polar Bear Plunge in front of Resorts Casino Hotel. Tim Hawk, for The Star-Ledger

WASHINGTON

Full slate awaits returning Congress

Without bipartisan agreement, government could verge on shutdown

Jeff Stein Washington Post

Congress faces a jam-packed to-do list this month with deadlines looming on difficult issues — including how to fund the government and avoid a shutdown, stabilizing the nation's health insurance program for poor children, and whether to shield young undocumented immigrants from deportation.

Fresh off a party-line vote in favor of legislation overhauling the tax code, the negotiations will test whether Congress and the White House still have the potential to craft any form of bipartisan agreement. If so, several of the year's most contested issues might be resolved with months to spare before the 2018 midterm campaign heats up.

If not, the government could soon be on the verge of a shutdown, with pressing questions regarding health care, immigration and other policies left unresolved. Also on the agenda is emergency relief for regions upended by last year's natural disasters, a key national security program and the fate of an agreement to stabilize health insurance markets under the Affordable Care Act.

A big unknown is whether the shortened timeline will prove an asset in addressing all the issues before Congress, or a hindrance.

"Some of these things they're talking about are huge, contentious issues," said Jane Calderwood, who served as chief of staff for then-Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine. "I can't imagine it's doable, and certainly not doable in a thoughtful way."

Jim Manley, who served as an aide to then-Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said, "I'm not sure I've seen anything like it, at least in recent years, where

SEE CONGRESS, 10

ATLANTIC CITY

Former Fox host Carlson to lead board of Miss America

Amy Kuperinsky For The Star-Ledger

When incendiary and misogynistic emails from Miss America CEO Sam Haskell came to light last month, onetime Fox News host Gretchen Carlson was among the many pageant winners to rally for his ouster.

Now Carlson, Miss America 1989, has been voted the new chairwoman of Miss America board of directors, the first former titleholder to preside over the contest.

The Atlantic City-based Miss America Organization announced on Monday that its board of directors had selected Carlson for the post and that several other former Miss Americas will join the board.

"Everyone has been stunned by the events of the last several days, and this has not been easy for anyone who loves this program," Carlson said in a statement. "In the end, we all want a strong, relevant Miss America and we appreciate the existing board taking the steps necessary to quickly begin stabilizing the organization for the future."

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